



Meeting with the City of Janesville
Wednesday, July 14, 2004, 8:30 – 10:00am

People in attendance

Michelle Bostinelos, Planning Department, Janesville MPO
Jessica Bullen, WisDOT District 1
Marshall Quade, WisDOT District 1
Casey Newman, WisDOT BOP
Dave Murett, WisDOT BOP
Arun Rao, WisDOT BOP
Brad Cantrell, Janesville Planning Department
Doug Venable, Director of Economic Development
Michael Hayek, Director of Engineering
Dave Mumma, Transit Director

- 1) Overview of WisDOT's meeting purpose and WisDOT's long-range plan, *Connections 2030*, by WisDOT staff: The meeting began at 8:40 with introductions. Casey Newman, WisDOT, gave an overview of WisDOT's long-range plan *Connections 2030*. WisDOT is seeking input on transportation planning issues from larger Wisconsin cities at this point. *Connections 2030* is scheduled to be completed in 2006.
- 2) Gathering of input from City of Janesville: Staff from the City of Janesville answered the following questions and gave WisDOT a copy of Janesville southeast and northeast area plans, as well as the Janesville Area 1998-2020 Long Range Transportation Plan.
 - a. Current transportation and development issues in Janesville.

Northeast Area Issues

The Janesville Northeast Area Plan covers a major growth area of the city. The biggest development in this area is the Super Wal-Mart/Sam's Club project that has the potential to cause significant future traffic issues and impacts on Highway 26 and 14. A traffic study and a consultant to review the study have been hired. Wal-Mart will pay for \$2 million of improvements, which include linking a local road to Highway 26. The city emphasized a need for an underpass of I 90, for which right of way is already preserved.

Another major transportation issue for the city is State Highway 26, of which there have been discussions with the state about access controls.

The City views the road as an important local arterial road as well as an important state highway. Residents and commercial uses are in the area and development continues. The city is requesting a signalized intersection at McCormick instead of the interchange. However, it would accept an interchange at Town Line Road. Concern was expressed about backups due to heavy volumes at 2 intersections on Highway 26 (McCormick and Kettering). The city also wants bike trail crossings at Highway 26 and at Rotamer Road.

Highway 14: Another major issue is the widening of Highway 14. The city states that it is necessary to widen the highway from 4 to 6 lanes until Wright Road. The busiest intersection is Highway 14 and 26. New off ramps are needed from the interstate. Insulation and noise barriers will be necessary as I90 is widened. The city identified some local roads that will be widened to 4 lanes and will provide important links in the area between Highway 26 and 14. There is lots of land that is planned for development in the Town of Janesville, and could be annexed to the city, if farmers are willing to develop the land. The city also mentioned the desire for a 3 lane collector distributor road. Major intersections with Highway 14 will need to be expanded if these other links are put in. Diamond interchanges are preferred by the city.

Transit: The Wal-mart project also poses a challenge for transit service, as extending it to Wal-mart would require sacrificing something else. City is also looking into Park and Ride sites, and says the K-mart parking lot is currently a default park-and-ride for state employee vanpool. State purchased properties south of Highway 14 may be park and ride opportunities.

The current policy is not to provide service to higher income residential areas. No transit service is planned in the northeast plan area, but may slowly migrate to the areas as the area infills commercially. Ultimately, service will go in due to a retirement center planned and school district issues.

The Southwest Area Plan and Southeast Side Development Issues

The southwest area includes the area around the Highway 11 bypass, for which plans are in place or under development. There is a large industrial area on the southeast side. A new 4 lane divided street provides a direct route into GM. Widening Highway 11 from Center Ave (US Hwy 51) to I 90 is desired. Center Ave will be reconstructed and upgraded next year.

The area to the south of Highway 11 is competing for a huge distribution center. Janesville is identified as a good location in the region for big distribution centers. The major growth is taking place in the Beloit Avenue/Highway 11 area all the way east beyond I90. However, it was

mentioned that this area has some of the best farmland in the world. Another consideration is that General Motors is committed to stay in its current plant until 2012, so the city wants to ensure GM has a site available for a new plant after that, and considers this area as the best opportunity for that.

This industrial area is well served by rail. The Union Pacific rail line runs south of Highway 11 along Beloit Avenue, and through the industrial park on this side of town. By 2030, the area will be completely developed by rail industrial sites.

A single entity owns much of the land in the Beloit Avenue/Highway 11 area, which is completely flat. The City wants Reed Road to provide industrial access between Delavan Drive and Highway 11. Seneca Foods, a big employer in this industrial area, wants the farmland for irrigation. This current situation frees Seneca foods of the need to treat water, which also benefits the city's water treatment system. Seneca Foods currently has irrigation and lease arrangements for this land.

City staff stated that distribution centers are looking farther out from the Chicago area. This fact and the fact that there is direct access to multiple major highways makes this area a viable choice for distribution centers. City staff were not sure whether the industrial area around Highway 11 would compete with the intermodal facility at Rochelle or perhaps be fed by the Rochelle development.

Land Uses Issues

Janesville has experienced population growth in the last couple decades because of availability of affordable housing, good schools, and good access.

The Southeast side has a lot of industrial development. The northeast has residential and commercial development, and the south and west has mostly residential development. The city is hoping that west side commercial development will increase due to the highway 11 bypass.

The city is hoping for an extension of the Highway 11 bypass to Highway 14. They see this as relieving interstate traffic, and stated that local highway 14 routes are important in relieving traffic pressures.

Rail Issues

The city views the Union Pacific (UP) rail connection between here and Chicago as an important link, and very important 20 years out as development comes in. During the state rail plan process, this rail link was identified as a secondary intercity route (Madison to Chicago). Preservation of the Evansville to Madison rail corridor is important. UP

now basically ends at Janesville. Their major yard is here. But they have a spur line to Evansville. Congestion is an issue in Janesville due to the increase in rail traffic, but city officials feel increased rail activity is good for the city.

WSOR needs to expand their Janesville yard. A bridge that has become a choke point serves the yard. The city would like to expand it to 4 or 5 tracks.

Intercity/Commuter Rail: If Metra is extended to Clinton, the city feels it should come 10 miles further to Janesville, since there are more facilities in Janesville for storage of trains and maintenance. Other points brought up:

- Volumes on I-90/39 will push commuter rail as congestion increases.
- There are many commuters to Chicago from the Janesville area.
- Bi-state Wisconsin and Illinois cooperation is needed. Examples of this cooperation are
 - City of Beloit – transit crossing into IL looked into, eventually connect to Rockford
 - KRM

In general, commuter or intercity rail service hasn't reached the priority level in Janesville yet, but from a long-term viability point of view, its seen as a long-term strategy. City staff felt that rail would have to connect urban areas eventually. Janesville is already thinking about a park and ride for a rail service at the Highway 11/I90 interchange and using the highway system to collect people to the rail service.

Air Issues

In terms of the air mode, the city would like to see the Airport expansion continued, and in particular the runways extended. They envision the airport as a corporate aviation center. A maintenance facility for corporate aircraft is desired. Van Galder will continue to be the primary intercity bus passenger service provider to the Chicago airports.

Greyhound/Intercity Bus Issues

The city suggested that the state look more at intercity transportation other than the private auto.

Greyhound recently pulled service out of Janesville because they have to come downtown. Greyhound still serves Beloit, which uses a truck stop on I90. Greyhound wants locations on interstates. The problem is that there are people in cut areas that don't have transportation now. The state needs to look at the integration of intercity bus and passenger rail, and connect the two.

Transit Issues

The City transit director stated that regional transit makes the most sense, and that economies of scale could be achieved through a regional approach (i.e. Beloit-Janesville). The Beloit-Janesville intercity route showed double-digit growth, partly because of people traveling to county services located in Janesville (job center, courts, etc.). Another example of regional transit in the area is that Beloit Transit is planning to extend bus service down to Machesney Park, IL, because of growth in the Rockton/Roscoe area in Illinois. Bus travelers can then take the Rockford Transit buses to locations south of Machesney Park. In addition to these examples, the City of Janesville gets requests from people to travel from Milton to Janesville, and stated that ultimately there will be public transit to Milton.

Supplemental rural transit program: Rock County provides Sec. 8521 service. There has been an increase in demand for this service but the county lacks funding. It could be possible to develop a countywide agency if we move to a regional approach.

ADA: Janesville uses the county to provide para-transit services; the city passes 5309 money to the county. So, ADA issues have less of an impact for the City of Janesville than in other cities. Rock County has 5 vans for para-transit, and they could be using twice that.

The City emphasized that predictable state funding and local funding base is critical for transit. Staff pointed out that service to new industrial areas is an issue in Janesville. Janesville has tried using federal Job Access/Reverse Commute funds for this purpose, but JARC funds are only available for a few years and then they must be back filled with local funds. Another observation made by the city transit director is that the elderly are not as big a component of transit ridership in Janesville as it is in other cities around the state.

Bike Trails

The City wants to connect Janesville to the region using state, county, and city funds. Janesville already has a 20-mile network to Milton on an abandoned rail corridor. In the long term the city wants to extend the bike trail system to the Sugar River Trail. The City is eventually hoping to connect the Afton trail to Beloit.

Other issues

A Highway 11 connection to I43 to connect Janesville to Milwaukee area is important for Janesville. The city would like to see this made into a 4-lane highway.